Railway Bookstalls of A.H. Wheeler & Co,

2599. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that M/s. A.H. Wheeler & Co. held 360 bookstalls, as on 12th April, 1984;

(b) whether the same firm held 391 bookstalls, as on 11th December, 1985; and

(c) if so, what are the details of thirty one bookstalls, with the names of stations, allotted to M / A.H.Wheeler & Co., during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on theTable of the Sabha.

Rail Tickets Through Internet

2600. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Northern Railway has introduced Internet ticketing system;

(b) if so, the details of the system;

(c) how the IRCTC has created a secure payment gateway, to enable on-line payment;

(d) whether any agency has been authorized to collect money on behalf of the Railways; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir. Internet Ticketing System has been introduced in the Delhi area by Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation. (IRCTC).

(b)The ticket can be booked on the IRCTC's website using a credit card and at the option of the customer either collected in person from

IRCTG's office in Delhi or obtained through a courier service.

(c) IRCTC software interacts with the bank gateway servers and authenticates payments. 128 bit encryption has been used to maintain security of the credit card transaction.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) IRCTC is giving advance payment to Indian Railways for this purpose, against which the ticket amount is adjusted.

Strength of Railways

2601. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the Zone-wise strength of Railways, as on 30th June, 2002;

(b) what would be the strength of Railways after "right sizing" the Railways;

(c) whether it is a fact that pensioners in Railways would surge ahead of the working employees by 2006-07;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) how the Railways would bear the burden of pension?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA)*:* (a)The approximate Zone-wise strength as on 30th June 2002 is as under:

Central Railway	=207849	Northern Railway	=236216
Eastern Railway	=200157	North Eastern Railway	=96579
Northeast Frontier Railway	= 76926	South Central Railway	=118925
Southern Railway	=122450	South Eastern Railway	=196110
Western Railway	=177601		

(b) It is planned to bring the all Indian Railways strength (including the Production Units and other Railway Units) to about 11.8 lakhs by 2010.

(c) to (e) The number of pensioners on Railways were 11.31 lakhs as on 31.3.2001 and this is like'y to go up by about 3% to 4% every year